



DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY  
HEADQUARTERS, UNITED STATES ARMY, EUROPE, AND SEVENTH ARMY  
THE ADJUTANT GENERAL  
UNIT 29058  
APO AE 09081

APR 1 2003

AEAAG

MEMORANDUM FOR SEE DISTRIBUTION

SUBJECT: USAREUR Retiree Council Minutes

1. The minutes of the USAREUR Retiree Council meeting on 19 February 2003 have been reviewed and approved.
2. The Point of contact for this memorandum is the USAREUR Retirement Services Officer at DSN 379-6080 or email: [usareur-rso@hq.1perscom.army.mil](mailto:usareur-rso@hq.1perscom.army.mil).

FOR THE COMMANDER:

JON E. FINKE  
COL, U.S. Army  
Theater Adjutant General

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EA ASG/BSB  
EA USAREUR ASG/BSB RSO  
EA USAREUR Retiree Council Member



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2 March 2003

MEMORANDUM FOR Commanding General, United States Army, Europe and Seventh Army,  
ATTN: AEACG, Unit 29351, APO AE 09014

SUBJECT: Minutes of the USAREUR Retiree Council Meeting

1. The 86th meeting of the USAREUR Retiree Council convened in the USAREUR DCS, G-1, Conference Room, Campbell Barracks, Heidelberg, at 0915 hours on 19 February 2003.

2. The following persons were present:

a. Voting Members:

COL (Ret) Robert A. Mentell	President
COL (Ret) Alan B. Phillips	Vice President
CW3 (Ret) Sandra K. Simpson	Secretary
COL (Ret) Steven V. Boylan	Member
LTC (Ret) Sheldon Dick	Member
CW4 (Ret) Robert L. Gambert	Member
MAJ (Ret) Donald W. Struve	Member
CW3 (Ret) Mack C. West	Member

b. Nonvoting Members:

Mr. Glen L. Snow	Adjutant General Representative
Mr. Gerald W. Owens	Acting USAREUR RSO

c. Visitors:

Mr. Richard Groccia	Federal Benefits Unit (FBU), US Consulate General, Frankfurt
CPT John Scalia	Chief, Personnel Actions Division, PSSD, 1 <sup>st</sup> PERSCOM

3. Opening Remarks.

a. The President:

1) Expressed the gratitude of the Council to CW3 West for his service as secretary and welcomed CW3 Simpson as the new secretary.

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2) Reported the excused absence of LTC (Ret) Klein who had scheduled CONUS leave prior to his appointment to Council. His four-year term of membership on the Council will begin with the next meeting.

3) Announced the reassignment of Ms. Jones, former USAREUR RSO, who accepted a position in Arizona. Council wished her well in her new assignment.

4) Announced the resignation from the Council of COL (Ret) Alexander due to his relocation to the United States.

b. Council reviewed and approved the proposed agenda without change.

4. Approval of Minutes. Council reviewed published minutes of the 6 November 2002 meeting. Council noted that the issue concerning Army Echoes, contained in paragraph 10, page 10, included the problem of non-receipt, mostly by individuals with German postal addresses. This issue was subsequently forwarded to Chief of Staff, Army, Retiree Council.

President reminded Council of the procedural requirement for members to review the minutes upon electronic receipt and to submit comments, in advance of the next meeting, to Vice President and Secretary.

5. President's Report. COL Mentell reported:

a. He had office calls with the following members of the USAREUR leadership since the last Council meeting.

Ms. Diana Ohman  
COL Richard G. Jung, Sr.  
COL George A. Latham  
LTC Mark Davis  
Ms. Audre Binder

Director, DoDDS-Europe  
Commander, 100<sup>th</sup> Area Support Group  
Commander, 104<sup>th</sup> Area Support Group  
Deputy Commander, 1<sup>st</sup> PERSCOM  
Executive Office, 409<sup>th</sup> Base Support Battalion

b. He represented the Council at the USAREUR Change of Command.

c. He represented USAREUR and the Council at the meeting of the USAFE Retiree Council on 4-5 February at Ramstein Air Base. Present were Retiree Activity Office representatives from Aviano AB, RAF Mildenhall/Lakenheath, and Spangdahlem AB, plus the president of the U.S. Military Retiree Association, Southern Italy. The primary purpose of the meeting was to approve issues for submission to the USAF Retiree Council, which is to meet in April at Randolph Air Force Base, Texas. (See paragraph 8 below, USAFE Report.)

d. He provided Council a copy of the Military Postal Service Agency decision paper which resulted in the disapproval of the request of Commander, US Forces Korea, (and others) to eliminate the 16-ounce limit on retiree use of the military postal service system. It showed that the Army concurred with the request, the Navy and the Marine Corps non-concurred, and the Air Force recommended raising the limit to 5 pounds.

e. He presented demographics of military retirees and annuitants residing in the USAREUR area of responsibility, i.e., Europe, Africa and the Mid-East, as of the end of FY 2002 as provided by the Defense Manpower Data Center. He made the following points:

(1) There are 14,266 retirees of all services residing in the theater – 7,253 Army, 1,464 Navy/Marine Corps, and 5,549 Air Force – with 7,813 or 55% of those retirees reside in Germany. The numbers are decreasing slightly over previous years.

(2) There are 3,788 retiree 65 years of age or older of all services residing in the theater – 1,826 Army, 356 Navy/Marine Corps, and 1,606 Air Force - or 27% of the total retiree population in theater. The numbers are increasing both in absolute terms and as a percentage of the retiree population.

(3) There are 1,957 annuitants of all services residing in the theater – 1,182 Army, 158 Navy/Marine Corps, and 598 Air Force – with 1,060 or 54% of those annuitants reside in Germany. (For the purpose of these demographics, an annuitant is a surviving spouse of a military retiree who is receiving payments from the Department of Defense, predominantly proceeds of Survivor Benefit Plan.) The numbers are increasing over previous years.

(4) There are 1,414 annuitants 65 years of age or older of all services residing in the theater – 842 Army, 106 Navy/Marine Corps, 466 Air Force - or 72% of the total annuitant population in theater. The numbers are increasing both in absolute terms and as a percentage of the annuitant population.

f. He provided Council a copy of the Posture Statement of Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld before the 108<sup>th</sup> Congress House Armed Service Committee, 5 February 2003.

6. DCS, G-1, Report: None

7. Adjutant General Report. Mr. Snow prefaced his report by mentioning that the current focus of the Adjutant General's office is now on the management of casualties in the event of war.

a. USAREUR Retiree Actions Implementation Plan:

(1) Coordinate with USAREUR Retiree Council (Priority 1): [Use the Council for coordinating actions affecting the retirees, their family members and annuitants; Reinforce within the staff the use of the Council in this role.] Council continues to see this as one of the major missions spelled out for the Adjutant General in USAREUR regulations. Mr. Snow expressed his appreciation for the Council's participation in the Ranger Hall of Fame nomination process.

(2) Update USAREUR Regulation 608-25, Retirement Services Program (Priority 1): [Publish an update to USAREUR Regulation 608-25, dated 31 October 1991.] Mr. Snow acknowledged receipt in December 2002 of Council's recommended draft of the Army in Europe Supplement to AR 600-8-7, as the new document will be designated. He said Europe Region, Installation Management Agency, concurred in an earlier draft of the supplement (which omitted some of the provisions recommended by the Council) submitted by the RSO prior to coordination with the Council.

Mr. Snow noted that in his initial review of the Council document he found several provisions that needed to be included in the Supplement. He said he would complete his review of the Council document and would discuss it with the President prior to proceeding further.

(3) HQDA DCSPER Letter "Support for Retired Community" (Priority 1): [Endorse to ASG and BSB commander the annual HQDA letter "Support for the Retired Community."] Mr. Snow has already prepared the Army in Europe draft memorandum in anticipation of receiving the memorandum from Army DCS, G-1. Council suggested that the Theater AG waits for receipt of the Army memorandum so he may include a copy of it when he sends out his memorandum, which Mr. Snow said he would coordinate with the Council.

(4) USAREUR Retirement Services Web Site (Priority 1): [Update and maintain a USAREUR/1st PERSCOM Retirement Services Web Page.] Council believes this should remain an open item. Web page will be maintained but not enhanced until the next RSO is on board. Council requested the AG determine if the web page can include links to selected non-military web sites with an appropriate disclaimer. Mr. Snow agreed this might be possible.

(5) USAREUR Retiree Bulletin (Priority 2): [Continue to publish a semiannual USAREUR Retiree Bulletin targeted to the retiree/annuitant population in the USAREUR geographical area of responsibility.] The next bulletin will be distributed about 1 July 2003. President requested members provide to Vice President by 25 April their recommendations for bulletin topics for further discussion by the Council at the May 2003 meeting.

(6) Tri-Service Coordination Meeting (Priority 2): [Support and participate in the Semi-Annual Meetings of the Tri-Service Coordinating Meeting of Military Retiree Councils in

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Europe.] President acknowledged that he has the action on this topic, i.e., to draft a response to the USEUCOM J1 questions.

(7) USAREUR Casualty Assistance Officer's Guide (Priority 2): [Publish USAREUR-Unique guidance to supplement the HQDA Casualty Assistance Officer's Guide.] During previous meetings, Council identified the need for a supplement or addendum to HQDA Casualty Assistance Officer Guide because the current HQDA guide is more oriented to active duty deaths in CONUS. President noted that Council has an open action to provide PSSD a recommended draft of material for inclusion in a USAREUR Casualty Assistance Officer Guide or supplement.

(8) Publish Retiree/Annuitant Address/Mailing List (Priority 2): [Provide periodically to USAREUR RSOs a list of retirees and annuitants in their areas of responsibility.] Council is working on a study to determine usefulness of the significant accomplishments in breaking out APO numbers and German postal codes by BSBs that have already been achieved through LTC Dick's efforts. (See paragraph 11 below, Progress Report, APO/PLZ by BSB.)

(9) Local Retiree Council (LRC) Presidents/Retirement Service Officers (RSO) Standardized Email Accounts. (Priority 3): [Provide guidance to promote the creation of email address for RSOs and LRC presidents.] Council restated its recommendation for generic email addresses for RSOs and LRC presidents. Some RSOs have generic addresses but most LRC Presidents do not. Council will readdress this action at the May meeting of Council after Mr. Snow reviews the memoranda sent by 1<sup>st</sup> PERSCOM to the IMA-Europe director and the ASG/BSB commanders. Those instructions may have been incomplete, in that the suggested format (President@<domain>) does not reflect that it pertains to LRC. Also, if more than one LRC share the same domain, the generic user-id may have to be made explicit (e.g., LRC-Pres.BSB1, and LRC-Pres.BSB2).

(10) Local Retiree Council (LRC) Minutes/Appointment (Priority 3): [Maintain current LRC minutes and appointment documents IAW UR 608-25. Not all LRCs appear to be in compliance with USAREUR Regulation 608-25, which requires LRC appointment documents and minutes to be provided to the AG.] No changes were reported.

b. USAREUR 2002 Retiree Appreciation Day (RAD) After-Action Report: Mr. Snow stated that the RAD AAR is in its final stage of being approved.

c. USAREUR 2002 RSO Training After-Action Report: Mr. Snow stated that there would be no After-Action Report.

d. USAREUR 2003 RSO Training: Mr. Snow said the schedule for the next RSO training is being held in abeyance until the arrival of the new USAREUR RSO.

e. USAREUR FY 2003 Retiree Appreciation Day Planning: Mr. Snow reported that the only date currently available for Patrick Henry Village Pavilion is 6 September. RSO will reexamine the timing of the event since it is still doubtful the Council President would be able to participate in a September event.

Council strongly recommended the RAD remains in Heidelberg and that it be rescheduled to mid-October to ensure Council President can participate. Selection of the guest speaker should take into account the topics of particular interest to the USAREUR retiree population.

f. Input from ASGs/BSBs for CSA Retiree Council: Adjutant General received one response from 22<sup>nd</sup> ASG. Although it was late, Council considered it in preparation of the USAREUR submission. President asked the AG representative to acknowledge the 22<sup>nd</sup> ASG submission. The President also reminded that the tasking letter asking for the input of ASG/BSB commanders for the 2004 CSA Retiree Council meeting be sent out in early September 2003 so the Council could consider those recommendations at its November 2003 meeting.

g. Council Nomination Input: A nomination packet was received from 26<sup>th</sup> ASG and forwarded to the Council president for further action.

8. USAFE Report. In the absence of CMSgt Roberts, COL Mentell presented the following:

a. USAFE Council forwarded three issues for consideration by the USAF Retiree Council when it meets in April 2003. It recommended:

(1) Raising the DOD-imposed weight limit for sending and receiving mail through the military postal system from less than 16-ounces to five pounds.

(2) Granting full concurrent receipt of DoD retired pay and DVA disability compensation.

(3) Expanding the provisions of the retiree dental insurance program to OCONUS retirees and allow them the opportunity to enroll and receive care.

b. USAFE Council identified six additional issues needing resolution:

(1) Replacing the retirement assistance officer (RAO) at Incirlik AB.

(2) Replacing the RAO at Ramstein AB.

(3) Urging the USAFE Commander to coordinate with the Army and Navy commanders to influence a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) referring a Tri-Services retiree meeting annually.

(4) Enacting provisions for returning remains of a deceased retiree/family member to overseas point of origin when death occurs following medical evacuation to a CONUS medical treatment facility.

(5) Establishing "organizational" e-mail accounts for Retiree Affairs that would alleviate the problems they are experiencing with various individual accounts.

(6) Obtaining authority for the surviving spouse to accompany back to home station the remain of a retiree who died after being medically evacuated to a CONUS medical treatment facility.

9. Special Visitor: Mr. Richard Groccia, Federal Benefits Unit, US Consulate, Frankfurt, presented a briefing to the Council on the mission and functions of the FBU.

a. He discussed the relationship between Medicare and Social Security and the different eligibility requirements for both the wage earner and the spouse.

(1) He underscored that fact that Medicare eligibility will remain at age 65, even though entitlement to full Social Security benefits will increase in two-month increments from age 65 to age 67 beginning with individuals born in 1938.

(2) He emphasized that individuals residing overseas need to apply for Medicare and that they should do so prior to their 65<sup>th</sup> birthday. At that time, the beneficiary may also apply for Social Security benefits even if they want to defer receipt of those benefits. (If a beneficiary is age 65 or over and is eligible for Medicare but not enrolled in Medicare Part B, he or she will not be entitled to health care coverage under Tricare or Tricare-for-Life benefits.)

b. He explained the bilateral (totalization) agreements between the United States and 20 other nations (most in the USAREUR footprint) that govern eligibility both for US Social Security benefits and receipt of host nation pension benefits.

The Council expressed its appreciation for clarification of these complex issues and thanked Mr. Groccia for the continuing support his office provides and for being routinely represented at the annual USAREUR RAD.

10. Special Reports.

a. Issues for CSA Retiree Council (COL Mentell): COL Mentell distributed copies of the seven issue papers that USAREUR forwarded to HQDA for consideration at the April 2003 meeting of the Chief of Staff, Army, Retiree Council, pointing out that they are available on the USAREUR Retirement Services web site. The issues are:



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(1) Concurrent Receipt of DOD Retired Pay and Department of Veterans Affairs Disability Compensation: Further the concept of equity between military retirees and other federal retirees by supporting the concurrent receipt of Department of Defense retired pay and Department of Veterans Affairs disability compensation.

(2) Medical Care (No Forced Choice): Support on-going efforts to enhance cooperation between the Department of Defense and the Department of Veterans Affairs health care systems that preserve or improve the health care benefits for all beneficiary groups including military retirees, without forcing them to make an irrevocable choice between the two systems.

(3) Direct Deposit of Annuitant Payments to Foreign Banks: Urge DFAS to implement expeditiously a direct deposit system for surviving spouses residing in foreign countries to have their annuity checks deposited in foreign banks in the same manner Social Security recipients have enjoyed for some time.

(4) Dental Insurance for OCONUS Retirees: Expand the Retiree Dental Insurance Program to permit beneficiaries residing outside of CONUS to enroll and receive care overseas.

(5) Military Postal Support for Retirees Overseas (16-Ounce Postal Limit): Support efforts to raise the DOD-imposed weight limits.

(6) OCONUS Receipt of Army Echoes: Renew efforts to identify problems with retiree receipt of official mailings especially, but not limited to, those with foreign mailing addresses. Continue to support with sufficient resources the educational efforts necessary to address programs such as TRICARE for Life, separation incentives, SBP, and bonuses. Target audiences should not only include those who have already retired and those who are about to retire, but also those who are making military career decisions.

(7) Troops to Teachers Program Overseas: Urge expansion to DODDS schools overseas of the program that provides incentives to encourage former service members to pursue careers in education upon retirement.

b. Well-Being: COL Mentell and LTC Dick reported on their participation in the USAREUR Well-Being Steering Committee meeting. Not only is the Well-Being lab conducted by the 26<sup>th</sup> ASG continuing, but USAREUR has decided to implement the Well-Being program throughout the Army in Europe. Council noted that Well-Being explicitly includes retirees in its target population and Well-Being functions and activities track with issues of retiree interest. Council broadly discussed potential relationships of RSO activities with those of Well-Being coordinators at ASG or BSB level.

## 11. Progress Reports.

a. APO/PLZ by BSB (LTC Dick): LTC Dick explained again the procedures he used to attribute APO numbers and German postal codes to BSB geographical area of responsibility. The template he developed is applicable to any address data base and is prepared to provide that breakout to the USAREUR RSO (based on a more current version of the RAF), if requested. The result would be 1) demographic information by BSB and 2) mailing lists of recipients within their area of responsibility.

It was pointed out that RSOs with access to the Retiree Address Finder database can only query for individual entries. They cannot do that for the file as a whole, because the file is not queryable by APO or PLZ.

Mr. Snow agreed that, within constraints of the Privacy Act, this information would be useful to both commanders and RSOs. Council noted there would be no added impact on privacy considerations, because RSOs currently have access to the RAF for all of Germany. Council does not propose distribution to anyone other than to the Adjutant General, who would make further distribution. The process would merely break out the existing file by BSB.

Mr. Snow said he would review the concept and provide feedback at the next meeting.

b. Retiree Mini-Survey (COL Mentell): Council decided to review and update the work done to date by COL Alexander. COL Boylan agreed to assume responsibility for this project with assistance from LTC Dick. The aim is to request inclusion of Council survey questions in the next well-being survey, currently targeted at the 26<sup>th</sup> ASG. As USAREUR extends Well-Being to other BSB/ASG areas, the survey might be extended to those areas as well. Council members agreed to review the survey draft and provide additional input.

c. Council Liaison Matrix and Individual Liaison Report (COL Boylan): [Although Council recognizes that its members do not directly "represent" the communities in which they may reside, the matrix identifies leaders with whom Council members should maintain liaison regarding retiree services and issues.] COL Boylan presented the individual liaison assignments by council member. President requested that all members update their matrix as a matter of urgency to provide the contact information identity of the staff principals, with a complete update no later than one week prior to the next Council meeting.

If the primary contact is not available but members can reach a deputy, for example, that is an acceptable liaison contact. Contacts may be face-to-face, telephonic, email, or any other form of communication to ensure that key community leaders are aware of activities of the USAREUR Retiree Council and of retiree issues in their areas.

## 12. Liaison Discussion.

a. Medical/Dental Access (All): Despite current operations, retirees are still being seen. Members noted the likelihood that declining resources resulting from current military activity may degrade level of support in the near future.

b. Update on Local Councils (CW3 Simpson): CW3 Simpson provided and updated listing. CW3 West will assume responsibility for LRC liaison.

President expressed appreciation for work done by SSG (Ret) Larry Ford, President, 233<sup>rd</sup> BSB (Darmstadt) Local Retiree Council, on behalf of retirees in the Darmstadt community, especially in light of the fact that publicity on the newly-established commander's hotline included mention of retirees.

c. Update on Local Retiree Associations (CW4 Gambert): President requested CW4 Gambert distribute an updated list at the next meeting.

d. Army Family Action Plan (AFAP) (All): Members reported the reduction of planned AFAR conferences due to current military operations. Mannheim cancelled their AFAP. Darmstadt reduced their AFAP to one day.

## 13. Council Administration.

a. Existing Vacancy: Council voted to recommend to the Adjutant General that 1SG (Ret) Donald Gwinn be appointed to membership on the USAREUR Retiree Council, to fill the vacancy of COL Alexander, and that the individual and the nominating official be so notified.

b. Projected Member Vacancies: None

c. Unprojected Member Vacancies: None


d. Officer Vacancies: None

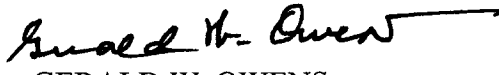
e. Time Line for USAREUR Retiree Council Administrative Actions: President distributed the revised timeline for URC actions. New format begins with the current meeting and shows actions to be completed to wrap up the action from the current meeting and to prepare for the next meeting. He asked that members be prepared to identify and discuss substantive changes or omissions at the next meeting.

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14. Selection of Next Meeting Date and Adjournment. The Council agreed to hold its next meeting on 7 May 2003. The meeting was adjourned at 1735 hours.

  
SANDRA K. SIMPSON  
CW3, Retired  
Secretary

  
GERALD W. OWENS  
Acting USAREUR Retirement  
Services Officer